

Exhibit P

KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL COURSE

Compiled and Published by the
Watch Tower Bible and Tract
Society of Pennsylvania

OCTOBER 1972

*This book is the property of the Kingdom Ministry
School. Please do not mark or make notes in it, as
other students will use it later.*

Made in the United States of America

WTPA000001

Parents clearly see their responsibilities toward their children, and youths are helped to benefit from Bible training

While still being imperfect, those applying Bible counsel gain improved health and better mental condition (Prov. 14:30)

With Bible's counsel on things needful and having a sure hope for the future, one can avoid many common frustrations and anxieties (Matt. 6:25-34; 1 Tim. 6:8-10)

Racial and national prejudices are dispelled (Acts 10:34, 35)

Young people gain proper respect for adults, especially elderly

Highest principles from God contained in the Bible, not just human theories; *they work* (1 Thess. 2:13; Matt. 22:37-39)

BIBLE'S PERFECTION IS SEEN IN ITS APPEAL TO GOOD HEARTS

Scriptures constitute perfect, refined message (Ps. 12:6; 119:140)

Bible's perfection is displayed in its ability to discern and reveal thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12, 13)

Gaining of understanding and pleasing God depend on heart

Easy to find excuses for rejecting the Bible if one lacks a good heart

Persons not desiring to humble themselves before God, admitting need for His help, haughtily reject the Bible (1 Cor. 1:26-29)

They seize upon seeming contradictions; demand that God provide the information they want, not what God decides

Testifies to accuracy of statement that "faith" is essential (Heb. 11:1, 6); even this reflects authenticity and origin of Bible

Purity, simplicity and reasonableness of the Bible's message appeal to humble ones who see their need for God and for God's Word

MAIN POINT: When with your Christian brothers, encourage discussion of reasons why we believe the Bible is God's Word and help them to appreciate that the Bible does not agree with what every pagan historian wrote or with every theory of men of science, but what the Bible says is truthful in every detail

SOURCES: *is* 30, 45-56, 104-108, 122-128, 136-146, 150-153; *ad* 112, 231, 232, 323, 579, 580; *ms* 45-48, 394-402; *mn* 5-10; *im* 20-24, 44; *sg* 14-19

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Invite class to comment on one evidence of inspiration of the Bible that they feel is outstanding and tell why (Emphasize fulfillment of prophecy; see *ms* 394-402.)

Ask class for experiences if any have had opportunity to speak on or defend inspiration of Bible before school or church groups

No. 5 - First Monday, 4:30

What Makes Good Overseers

JEHOVAH PROVIDES THE OVERSEERS

Jehovah, as the Great Overseer, is the owner of the flock (Acts 20:28)

He is the Overseer of our souls (1 Pet. 2:25)

Jehovah has appointed overseers

He has made Jesus the principal overseer of his flock

Jesus gave "gifts in men"; at the first the apostles evidently took the lead as ones 'given' by Christ (Eph. 4:8, 11, 12)

As new congregations grew, elders or "older men" were appointed to serve in each congregation

You are such elders; you have measured up to the Scriptural qualifications written under inspiration, have been recommended after careful consideration and prayer, and through the governing body the holy spirit has appointed you to serve as overseers

Your position is Scripturally referred to in three ways: elders, overseers, shepherds, all referring to the same position but from different viewpoints

Elder is the basic designation (Greek, *presby'te-*

ros) and refers to certain of your qualities as well as your position

Being an elder or older man is associated with having experience in dealing with life's problems; such a one has greater understanding, wisdom and judgment than a young person
In a spiritual sense you are like the elders of a community who can be looked to for sound counsel and guidance; others can bring problems to you for advice or judgment

Overseer (Greek, *e-pi'sko-pos*) describes the fundamental character of your work in behalf of the congregation

The term carries the thought of one who watches over, inspects, a guardian or superintendent, a shepherd of the flock

Protective care is a basic idea inherent in the Greek word

Oversight involves visiting, being concerned about or caring for something; visiting includes going to homes

Successful oversight requires being approachable, willing to listen to problems of brothers, kindly dealing with them in a refreshing way, not acting as if you are superior to the brothers (Matt. 20:25-28)

We must make a sincere request for it with a right heart and act in harmony with God's requirements (dedication, baptism, etc.) (Luke 11:9-13; Acts 15:8; 5:32)

We must 'circumcise heart by spirit,' clearing out obstructions rising from the heart in wrong desires and motives (pride, jealousy, etc.), which cause unresponsiveness to spirit (Rom. 2:29)

We must allow free flow through all channels of operation such as: personal study of inspired Word (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2); hearing word preached by ministers with spirit (1 Cor. 14:4); engaging in preaching service under direction of holy spirit (Acts 1:8); association at congregation meetings where Christ is by spirit (Heb. 10:24, 25); prayer for assistance in connection with problems when we are not sure what God's will is (Rom. 8:26, 27; Jas. 1:5)

To retain free flow of spirit, we must avoid "grieving," "resisting" or "outraging" it by acting in some way that is contrary to the purpose for which God is using it (Eph. 4:30; Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:26-29; 1 Thess. 4:7, 8)

Such a course could lead to spirit's withdrawal and evidence of spiritual weakening and sluggishness (1 Sam. 16:14; Ps. 51:11)

"Fruitage of the spirit" would also be missing

Reluctance to make room for flow of spirit through any one of its channels of operation could "allow place for the Devil" (Eph. 4:26, 27, 30; 1 Tim. 4:1)

Where problems arise, cause producing withdrawal of spirit must be determined by overseers to help (2 Pet. 1:5-8)

Congregation does not function as a worldly business, dependent mainly on efficiency of its administrators; rather, it prospers when God's spirit operates freely in the lives of its members

Jehovah's spirit does not make miraculous manifestations through us today, but its leadings are manifest to those who look for them with appreciation

The more we bring our lives into harmony with the inspired Word and the leadings of God's spirit, the fuller our 'spiritual life' becomes, leading to everlasting life, whether in the flesh or in the spirit (Heb. 12:9-11; Gal. 6:8; Rom. 8:5, 6)

MAIN POINT: God's holy spirit continues to operate marvelously today, accomplishing Jehovah's will. We should seek it and work in harmony with it

SOURCES: *ms* 466-468; *w68* 415, 416; *w70* 447, 448; *w71* 501-505; *ad* 1542-1546

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 27 - First Saturday, 10:40

How Bible Laws Are Administered

PROPER VIEWPOINT OF BIBLE LAW

Law is defined as the principles and regulations issuing from a superior authority. Simply stated, it is 'a rule of conduct or action' Theocratic laws are supreme, emanating from God and also enforced by him (Isa. 33:22; Acts 5:29)

God's law commands obedience to what is right and forbids what is wrong; while some of God's expressions are stated formally as commandments, any expression of divine will should be viewed as law, in that such establish a rule of action for us

We should not view as law only those commands to which are attached sanctions that are immediately enforced (Ps. 119:105-112)

God's laws are perfect, trustworthy, upright, clean, pure, true, more precious than gold or silver, sweeter than honey; in the keeping of them there is great reward (Ps. 19:7-11; 1 John 5:3)

Bible law embraces the regulations, principles, decisions, judgments and decrees that are found in the Bible

They constitute divine law, God's written law Man's laws may or may not be contrary to Bible laws (Matt. 22:17-21; Acts 4:19; 5:29)

Greek Scriptures do not set forth a law code but show the pattern for Christian life, which is as a law to us

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OBEY DIVINE LAWS

Man is made in the image of God, possessing powers of observation, intelligence and reasoning sufficient to learn from God's past dealings with mankind

The record of what God has done in the past constitutes a standard or guide in the absence of a written law or formal decrees (Rom. 1:20)

Various aspects of divine action from Adam through Noah's day could be observed: Man was given headship over woman, Adam being created first; mankind was given work to do; ownership rights were to be respected, as indicated by the restriction as to a tree in Eden; lying was shown to bring bad effects; Cain was banished for murder; because of mankind's violence God brought the Flood, but righteous ones were preserved alive and blessed Prosperity and divine blessing on patriarchs who shunned idolatry and worshiped Jehovah could be observed by others (Gen. 35:1-12; Job 31:26-28; 42:12, 13)

Prior to specific legislation against adultery, Joseph recognized that it was "sin against God" (Gen. 39:7-9)

Man is gifted with the inherent faculty of conscience—that inward sense of right and wrong that excuses or accuses one (Rom. 2:14, 15)

We today, as enlightened slaves of God, are responsible to learn, uphold and obey Bible laws (Matt. 4:4; Heb. 2:1-4)

LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM OF THINGS

Christians are not under the Mosaic law, but under the "law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21)

The Mosaic law is filled with guiding principles from God, but it is not by that Law covenant that Christians gain salvation (Col. 2:13, 14)

The 'law of Christ' embraces the whole scope of a Christian's life and work; it is law that originates with Jehovah himself (John 12:49)

The law of Christ is the "law of faith" (Rom. 3:27), because a righteous standing with God depends on faith in Christ; obedience must be motivated by faith (Rom. 14:23)

Christian law focuses primary attention on our relation to Jehovah (Matt. 4:10), then on faith in Jesus Christ and submission to him (1 John 3:23; Col. 1:18); next on our relationship with fellow Christians (John 13:34, 35; Heb. 10:24, 25); and, finally, on our obligation toward unbelievers (1 Pet. 2:13-15; Rom. 1:14, 15)

Law of Christian system shows what is in the heart

Of those in new covenant, law is said to be inscribed "in their heart"; we need to be sure that it is in our hearts (Jer. 31:33; 2 Cor. 3:3)

There are very few commands the breaking of which is sufficient reason for expelling one from the congregation

Hence, we are judged not only on our attitude toward these few that bring obvious sanctions, but also on how we really view all the other commands of God (Eccl. 8:11-13)

A person may attend meetings, share in field service and refrain from doing anything for which he could be disfellowshipped, but much more is required to have God's approval

One who retains a love for the world may not be barred from the congregation, but will he get eternal life? (1 John 2:15-17)

A person may never have committed actual fornication or adultery, but what is in his heart? (Matt. 5:28)

We may never commit an overt act against our brothers, but do we truly love them? (Rom. 14:13-15; Jas. 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:14, 15)

We may say that we love Jehovah, but is our love really of the kind that he requires? (Luke 10:25-28)

If we are given assignments that do not please us, do we grumble or quit, or do we prove that we really meant it when we said to God we would be his willing slaves? (Rev. 4:11; Ps. 110:3; 1 Thess. 1:9)

Law of Christian system does not reject as condemned those who truly love what is right, even though sinful inclinations at times overtake them (Rom. 8:1, 2; 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 2)

ADMINISTRATORS OF BIBLE LAWS

Jehovah's laws are enforced through various agencies: natural processes; secular authorities; husbands and fathers; elders in Christian congregation; the "faithful and discreet slave" represented by its governing body and appointed agencies; the angels; and Christ Jesus

Those with "spiritual qualifications" should help a fellow Christian who has inadvertently gone wrong; Christian obligation to do so (Gal. 6:1, 2; Jas. 5:19, 20)

Cases that involve simple personal differences can be handled by individuals concerned or with help of one of elders; not all matters require attention of a congregational judicial committee (1 Cor. 6:5)

Elders empowered as judges within the congregation to render decisions based on Bible laws (1 Cor. 5:12, 13; 6:1-6)

The elders are appointed by holy spirit; the laws they must apply are God's (Deut. 1:16, 17; Isa. 1:26)

These administrators of Bible law should be viewed with due respect, and as a loving provision of Jehovah (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13)

The governing body representing the "faithful and discreet slave" has special responsibility in directing the administration of Bible laws today among Jehovah's Christian witnesses. They act in a capacity like that of the first-century governing body of the Christian congregation (Acts 15:2, 6, 22, 23)

HOW BIBLE LAW IS ADMINISTERED

Much effort is put forth to educate us in the divine law, to help us bring our lives into line with God's requirements

Counsel is given regularly on a congregational and personal basis as a loving provision of Jehovah; we need to get His law in our minds and in our hearts (Rom. 12:2; Heb. 10:16)

Our conscience plays a part in personal application of Bible law and needs to be trained in it. An elder needs to be outstanding in his knowledge of Bible law and his ability to apply it

If someone commits a wrong "before he is aware of it," loving help is given in a spirit of mildness to readjust him (Gal. 6:1, 2)

Nevertheless, adverse consequences to wrongdoers are not completely eliminated (Gal. 6:7)

If a person starts on a course that is in direct conflict with divine law, an effort is made to help him get straightened out (Titus 3:10, 11; Jude 23)

In some flagrant cases it is necessary for elders to reprove "with severity" to restore a healthy and strong faith (Titus 1:10, 13)

Some, though not expelled from the congregation, may prove themselves to be undesirable company in a social way (2 Thess. 3:14, 15)

If serious wrongdoing affecting the congregation is reported, a hearing before the judicial committee is held

The judicial committee seeks, not only to uphold Jehovah's justice and protect the congregation against corrupting influences, but also to do everything possible to readjust the wrongdoer and help him to make straight paths for his feet (Heb. 12:12, 13)

Where repentance is lacking their merciful efforts cannot rightly continue toward him

BLESSINGS AND BENEFITS FROM ADMINISTRATION OF BIBLE LAW

By applying Bible law in our own life we receive blessings from Jehovah; such application brings peace of mind with contentment (Ps. 1:1-3; Prov. 3:1, 2, 13-18)

In the congregation, administration of Bible law brings peace and unity, makes for strength and growth (Acts 15:22, 30, 31; 16:4, 5; Eph. 4:11-13)

Our willing application of Bible law makes Jehovah's heart glad, like that of a father with a loving obedient son (Prov. 27:11)

MAIN POINT: Elders must administer Bible laws in the congregation with love and mercy toward their brothers and out of fear of Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, the One whom they represent

SOURCES: *ad* 1035-1037, 1045-1047; *or* 58; *w*70 393-409

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 28 - Second Monday, 9:10

Helping Men in the Congregation

JEHOVAH DIRECTS ATTENTION TO THE FAMILY UNIT

Family is a basic unit of human society, reflection of grand family of God (Job 38:7; Acts 17:28; Eph. 3:14, 15)

Jehovah gave attention to the family unit and its integrity by direction in Fifth Commandment, the "first command with a promise" (Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:2)

Inspired Scriptures have foretold vicious attack on family institution—must work hard to keep it intact (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5)

What are you personally doing to guide your own family in pure worship?

You cannot expect perfection; yet should work to improve your own family and thus be in position to help other families (1 Tim. 3:1, 4, 5)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADSHIP

In Hebrew society father was head of household; it was a patriarchal, not matriarchal, society

The father served as guardian, decision maker, judge and priest for his family (Gen. 12:7, 8; 31:32; Job 1:5)

He had the responsibility to teach God's principles to his family and to follow Jehovah's pattern of loving care (Deut. 6:6, 7; Gen. 18:19)

Headship of man in the family arrangement is clearly shown at 1 Corinthians 11:3, yet man is in subjection to God and Christ

Headship of man does not mean he is independent and without need to recognize a head

over him. Rather, he is obliged to follow direction and pattern set by his head, Christ (1 John 2:6)

Man given headship over woman because

(1) man was created first (1 Tim. 2:12, 13)

(2) woman was created from the man and for the man (Gen. 2:18, 22, 23; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9)

Headship includes responsibility of making final decisions and providing oversight and care for the family, both in material and spiritual matters (Eph. 5:23-27; 1 Tim. 5:8)

Example set by Christ with Christian congregation to be followed by husbands; in dealing with wife should lovingly consider her mental, emotional and physical makeup (Eph. 5:28-33; 1 Pet. 3:7)

Elders should exercise headship over wives in love, showing same quality to children, not irritating them (Col. 3:19; Eph. 6:1-4)

In presiding over your household, are you "reasonable, not belligerent," as an overseer in the congregation must be? (1 Tim. 3:3)

Obviously one should not be constantly belittling family members for what they do, but must take their feelings into consideration (Eph. 6:4)

Are you a loving family head, not the harsh, boss type? Do you in your leadership set a fine spiritual example?

EDUCATION AT THE FAMILY LEVEL

Husband or father responsible to take the lead in family instruction and training for life

No. 32 - Second Monday, 4:30

Readjusting Your Erring Brother

NEED FOR READJUSTMENT

Jehovah's will is that his servants reflect his fine qualities in attitude, word and action (Matt. 5:44-48; Eph. 5:1, 2)

Being imperfect, humans fall short of God's glory and do not reflect his image perfectly (Rom. 3:23)

True Christians, including elders, sin (Jas. 3:2; 1 John 1:8)

Readjustment needed in case of all in order to reflect Jehovah's fine qualities to greater degree

'To readjust,' as used in Scripture, means 'to bring to a proper state or position,' 'to fit things to a certain standard,' 'to restore'

Whenever we err, we must again be brought in line with Jehovah's standard as set forth in the Bible

Not only may adjusting be necessary when some backsliding is involved, but also to bring one's thinking initially into harmony with Jehovah's viewpoint on certain matters

Counsel and discipline based on God's Word serve to bring about adjustment in our attitude and our conduct; proper response works to our benefit, but resentment can be injurious (Prov. 6:23; Heb. 12:5-11)

"Gifts in men" (elders) are entrusted with the responsibility to readjust members of congregation (Eph. 4:11, 12)

We must be willing and alert to give aid (Acts 20:31; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3)

Should avoid becoming busybodies, prying into other people's affairs, making issue of minor matters and imposing own standards on others (Rom. 14:1-12)

Wrong to be suspicious and to ascribe bad motives to brothers; love does not suspect or disbelieve brothers unless sound evidence is available that they are wrong (1 Cor. 13:7; Heb. 6:7-9)

WHEN SOMEONE TAKES A FALSE STEP BEFORE HE IS AWARE OF IT

Important to realize why those wanting to serve Jehovah may take false steps

Sin at work in body members of all (Rom. 7:18-20)

Outside pressures at work or school may make it more difficult to keep sinful flesh in check, causing one to slip into wrongdoing

Bad association may gradually cause wrong desires to take root in heart (1 Cor. 15:33)

May lack Bible knowledge

Anxieties of life can become major concern and begin choking out appreciation for spiritual things (Matt. 6:33, 34; 13:22)

Individual may know certain course is wrong but

circumstances are such that, without premeditation, he slips into it before he is aware of it

One who slips into wrong course needs help to recover himself from weakness leading to his wrongdoing (Gal. 6:1)

To be of help, elder must hate wrong but have love and compassion for wrongdoer, earnestly desiring to aid him (2 Cor. 7:8-13; 12:14, 15, 20, 21; Jude 23)

Dealing harshly with erring one will not get best results; can cause him to resent counsel or discipline and not give it serious consideration it deserves; or it could crush him, as he may already feel very bad about what he has done

Mildness is in order when erring one was not deliberate but got caught unawares in Satan's trap (2 Tim. 2:24-26)

Domestic animal caught in trap can be freed by being ripped out, but such action would further injure it

Better to free animal from trap as gently as possible; same is true of Christian caught in Devil's snare

Jesus set kind example in handling a heated dispute (Luke 22:24-27)

Good not to be severe with older ones (1 Tim. 5:1)

In giving help, elders must be careful 'to keep eye on themselves, for fear they also may be tempted'

Elders cannot allow themselves to condone wrong or minimize it; must continue to hate what is bad (Jude 22, 23)

If someone of opposite sex involved, elder has to be very careful that he does not yield to temptation to become emotionally involved with erring one

WHAT TO DO "IF YOUR BROTHER COMMITS A SIN" AGAINST YOU

Certain minor wrongs can and ought to be overlooked and forgiven (Eph. 4:32)

Nevertheless, if a brother is doing something that might injure his relationship with Jehovah, the loving thing would be to help him

Deliberate failure to reprove a brother when that is definitely needed to restore him is tantamount to hating him, not caring about his life interests (Lev. 19:17; 1 John 3:15; Prov. 27:5)

Deliberate failure to give needed reproof can cause one to become bloodguilty before Jehovah, as individual is being deprived of something necessary to gain salvation (Acts 20:26, 27)

Certain sins committed against you personally cannot be overlooked

Such serious sins may involve fraud, slander, etc. When certain that a serious sin has actually been committed against you, you are under obligation to go to erring brother and "lay bare his fault between you and him alone" (Matt. 18:15)

Should he recognize his error, agree to rectify it and repentantly seek your forgiveness, you would rightly forgive him; your action would result in 'gaining him' in the sense of aiding him to remain in the congregation rather than being disfellowshipped therefrom

Should erring one refuse to make amends, you would be under obligation to try to show him the error of his ways at the "mouth of two or three witnesses"; his genuine repentance could settle the matter (Matt. 18:16)

Should the erring one still remain unrepentant, the matter would have to be brought to the attention of the congregation's judicial committee (Matt. 18:17)

If erring one does not rectify matters even when talked to by committee, he would be expelled from congregation

Since procedure outlined at Matthew 18:15-17 could lead to expulsion from congregation, manifestly reference is, not to minor matters or imagined sins, but to actual and serious sins against you that simply cannot be ignored

ASCERTAINING WHERE THE ERROR LIES WHEN ACCUSATIONS ARE MADE

When approached by someone with an accusation against a brother, consider the evidence

Is it reliable and can it be backed up by witnesses?

Sometimes may not be eyewitnesses, but circumstances may indicate that matter needs further investigation

Determine whether accuser is judging someone by his own conscience or has actually observed wrongdoing serious enough to warrant attention of judicial committee

If accusation is well founded and requires attention of committee, follow through accordingly

If accusation involves minor matter or cannot be backed up, no need to take matter further, but help accusing one get right view of matters (Col. 3:12-14; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19)

If two individuals have heated dispute, try to get to bottom of matter by having them speak directly to you one at a time; usually better than allowing them to argue in front of you

Ascertain whether minor matter or serious sin is involved

Often both will need counsel on maintaining self-control and letting love predominate in their handling of matters (Jas. 3:13-18; 1 Pet. 1:22)

ENCOURAGE ALL, THOUGH IMPERFECT, TO GO ON GROWING SPIRITUALLY

In view of repeated failings, brothers could easily become discouraged and downhearted (Rom. 7:21-25)

Scriptural encouragement is often needed to help them get right view so as not to lose freeness of speech in approaching Jehovah in prayer (1 John 3:19-24; 4:18)

Sin-atoning value of Jesus' sacrifice covers transgressions when one is truly repentant and enables one to retain clean conscience (Heb. 9:13, 14; 1 John 2:1, 2)

To make progress, brothers need to have in mind Jehovah's view of failings and shortcomings

He does not take critical view of our human failings; yet he does not condone wrong (Ps. 130:3, 4; Mal. 3:5)

Sin should be recognized for what it is—a failure to act in harmony with Jehovah's personality, standards, ways and will; should not seek to justify self

Desire should be to imitate Jehovah to greater degree, keeping self in check (1 Cor. 9:27; 1 Pet. 2:11)

Sincere regret should be in evidence when there is failure to live up to Jehovah's requirements, and efforts should be put forth to do better (Ps. 38:3-8; 51:3, 10, 11)

In helping others to make progress, elders should not allow selves to become upset with erring ones, treating them as enemies (Compare 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15)

Erring ones are not enemies, but Devil is (1 Pet. 5:8)

All of us must stand unitedly against Devil and combat desires of sinful flesh (Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Pet. 5:9; Jude 3, 4, 20-23)

Encourage brothers to appreciate Jehovah's mercy

Jehovah warmly appeals to sinful humans to change ways to gain his favor (Isa. 55:6, 7; Ezek. 33:11; Mal. 3:7; 2 Pet. 3:9)

Jehovah's merciful forgiveness well illustrated in cases of Manasseh and spirit-anointed Christian in Corinth (2 Ki. 21:5, 6, 16; 2 Chron. 33:11-13; 1 Cor. 5:1, 7-13; 2 Cor. 2:6-8)

Jehovah's mercy should not be presumed upon and used as excuse for wrongdoing (Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:12-22)

When brothers are disturbed about shortcoming (real or apparent) of others, elders should aid them to take Jehovah's merciful view

Should not begin doing what one conscientiously feels is wrong just because other brothers are doing it; conscience would be injured (Rom. 14:23)

Continue hating what is bad (Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9)

Avoid finding fault with others, judging them according to personal standards; one being judged may be strong in certain areas where one doing judging is himself weak (Matt. 7:1, 3-5; Rom. 2:1)

Rather than looking at and dwelling on faults, rejoice in progress brothers are making in cultivating fruitage of spirit, encourage them and take humble view of self (Phil. 2:1-4)

APPRECIATE

WHERE RESPONSIBILITY LIES

Elders recognize that they are not to run affairs of other families

Husband and father is divinely appointed head of family (1 Cor. 11:3)

Elders can give help when asked or when need arises, but husband and father, not elders, is one held accountable by Jehovah for way he discharges responsibilities

Elders should cooperate with father and husband to build up spiritual strength of family (or do so through mother, if no father in home or if father is an unbeliever)

When proper to do so, elders offer loving assistance

Imitate Jehovah's example as a shepherd (Ps. 23:1-6)

Show concern for flock, putting its welfare first (Acts 20:28-35)

Do not become discouraged when others fail to respond to counsel of God's Word

Elder's responsibility is to offer help; he cannot force anyone to apply what Bible says

Heart of individual must motivate him to make application (Rom. 10:10; 2 Thess. 3:5)

Good for elder to examine whether his counsel and admonition were based solidly on God's Word and presented in such a way as to appeal to person's love for Jehovah (2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Heb. 4:12)

Motive for rendering help should always be to uphold Jehovah's ways and to show loving concern for and unselfish interest in welfare of brothers (1 Cor. 13:3)

MAIN POINT: Problems should be handled in such a way as to help brothers make progress and to prevent making them feel that they are being rejected

SOURCE: or 154-164

No. 33 - Second Tuesday, 9:10

Helping Women in the Congregation

THE WOMAN'S PRIVILEGES IN THE CONGREGATION

Hebrew word for woman, *ish-shah'*, means female man; woman was meant to be complement or helper for man (Gen. 2:18)

Women have a long record of faithful service in the Christian ministry (Luke 8:1-3; Rom. 16:1)

Women received gifts of spirit at Pentecost, 33 C.E., to speak in tongues and prophesy (1 Cor. 11:3-5; Joel 2:28; Acts 1:13-15; 2:1-4, 14-18; 21:9)

Today women play a large role in the ministry (Ps. 68:11)

They are doing a large part in the work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making; the commission to "make disciples of people of all the nations" applies to women as well as to men (Matt. 28:19, 20)

Often they care for midweek arrangements for field service; sometimes they are used as substitutes in handling other congregational matters where there is a shortage of qualified brothers

By their conduct and attire they can provide a fine example of the effect of true Christianity

Women in the congregation should be "silent," that is, not disputing with men or trying to exercise authority over men in the congregation (1 Cor. 14:33-35; 1 Tim. 2:12)

Insofar as dress, hairstyles, and wearing of jewelry are concerned Christian women should be examples of modesty and dignity, appearing neither dowdy nor worldly, but recognizing that spiritual beauty is in good works and in "the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God" (1 Pet. 3:1-6)

By your helping women in the congregation to appreciate their privileges and position, they will be aided to contribute to its spiritual strength

GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT AND COUNSEL TO WOMEN IN THE CONGREGATION

Encourage them in their field ministry

Response is usually good when helpful arrangements are made for group witnessing; adjust as circumstances change; show interest in what the group is doing

Many of the regular pioneers are women, both single and married; keep this privilege before the congregation; give personal attention to those showing desire to pioneer

Many more can be temporary pioneers; when anyone's application is accepted, quickly notify the congregation; others may do it too if they know they will not be alone

audience, relating experiences, discussion between two or three on platform, brief skits, etc.

Material may also be presented by a symposium of speakers

In preparing a public talk, study the outline carefully to grasp main points and effectively tie in supporting scriptures and arguments

Additional points may be written in margins of the outline, or material may be retyped for easier reading

Develop one section at a time, rather than viewing talk's preparation as one big job

Some material can be deleted if there is too much

Keep the outline up to date with progressive revelation of truth

Deliver the public talk in a way that glorifies God

Keep the presentation on a high plane Scripturally, encouraging audience to use the Bible (1 Cor. 2:1-6)

Discuss scriptures, showing application or meaning

Present material with reasonableness and simplicity

Avoid slang or inappropriate humor; maintain Christian dignity

Be enthusiastic, seeking to teach and motivate the audience; stay within the time allotted

Spiritual aspect of the meeting will impress sincere ones (1 Cor. 14:24, 25)

MAIN POINT: The purpose of both the Theocratic Ministry School and public meeting arrangement is to instruct and qualify all in the congregation as praisers of Jehovah

SOURCES: or 79-81, 95, 96, 98-100, 102, 103; sg 9-13

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Have two brothers who are school overseers assigned in advance to give counsel as they would for student talks in the Theocratic Ministry School on an assignment of their choice, discussing briefly some point of counsel from the Speech Counsel form and highlighting points from the material to show how it could be done. (2 minutes each) (Do not give the student talks.) Ask students for examples of how they have kept public talk outlines up to date with progressive revelation of truth

No. 35 - Second Tuesday, 2:10

Our Responsibility to God and Caesar

JEHOVAH'S SERVANTS

HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO TWO SETS OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Since 607 B.C.E., when Jehovah's nation of Israel lost sovereignty, all of Jehovah's people have had to live in lands governed by worldly rulers Bible calls these worldly rulers "superior authorities" (Rom. 13:1)

Because of living in different lands, Christians have to cope with wide variety of laws and customs

However, Jehovah's servants are also accountable to God as ruler and to his Christ

Bible shows that Jehovah and Christ are 'supreme authorities' (Dan. 7:13, 14, 18)

No matter where servant of Jehovah lives, he must adhere to laws and principles of divine rule (Ps. 83:18)

Jehovah's servants need to determine clearly their duties toward both sets of governmental authorities

Basic principle governing this is given by Jesus at Matthew 22:17-21: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." ("Caesar" represents the secular state)

This sound principle grants that secular governments have right to set certain duties upon Christian subjects

It also shows that a Christian has duties to God; these take priority

Thus, authority of rulers over Jehovah's servants is only relative and also very tempo-

rary, as at Armageddon "superior authorities" of this world will cease functioning forever

PAYING BACK CAESAR'S THINGS TO CAESAR

Subjection: Every Christian must be in subjection to all the laws of the government under which he lives as long as those laws are not in conflict with God's laws (Titus 3:1; Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-15)

Since Jehovah permits secular governments to exercise authority for a while, if we opposed this arrangement we would put ourselves in opposition to God, who has allowed it (Rom. 13:2)

It is not the duty of elders to enforce laws of the secular state within the congregation, but they should encourage obedience to such laws. If illegal activities result in reproach being brought on congregation, this may bring congregational action

Fear: Worldly rulers are an object of fear in that God permits them to act as his "ministers" in punishing lawbreakers, even putting to death those who commit serious crimes (Rom. 13:3, 4, 7)

We should have proper fear of breaking laws of secular state and coming under its adverse judgment; but our fear of Jehovah exceeds our fear of secular rulers; our conscience is involved (Rom. 13:5)

Many secular laws for our good, such as those regulating traffic, sanitation, business practices, property, fire prevention. Punishing of law violators protects Christians too

When unscrupulous men try to hurt Jehovah's people, we can even appeal to government for protection. For instance, married Christian woman can take to court husband that deserts her

Honor: It is proper to show honor and respect to worldly rulers, even using their secular titles. (Rom. 13:7) It shows respect for office, not just person

Paul addressed King Herod Agrippa II with deep respect, counting himself happy to be before Agrippa in making his defense, acknowledging that Agrippa was expert on Jewish affairs

On same occasion, Governor Festus was present, and Paul addressed him as "Your Excellency," a mark of respect (Acts 26:1-3, 25)

Explains why we would call a judge "your Honor" and stand when he enters courtroom. It is part of respecting the secular authorities and their appointed officials for what they represent, namely, authority allowed by God and fulfilling certain beneficial purposes

Religious leaders do not deserve to be called by flattering titles they have taken; God is not using them as his "public servants," and his Son spoke against such use of flattering religious titles (Rom. 13:6; Matt. 23:8-10)

Taxes: Christians to pay all taxes that secular governments require, whether they consider them unfair or not (Rom. 13:7)

Jesus, in giving principle of paying back Caesar's things to Caesar, used it in reference to a question over paying taxes. He showed it was right to pay taxes

It would be violation of God's law if we tried to use illegal means to avoid taxes

Government performs services from which we benefit, so has a right to collect taxes. Since we do pay taxes, we can take advantage of various benefits governments give, such as social security payments, free or reduced-cost health programs, financial assistance to aged, etc.

Secular rulers may use large part of tax money for wrong purposes, but that is their responsibility and they will have to answer to God for it

Social Distinctions: In some parts of world, governments set up barriers in regard to social or racial groups

Jehovah's servants do not believe in such distinctions, but are not authorized to agitate against this, as that would violate our subjection

In first century, Christians did not fight governments on issue of slavery; rather, slaves were encouraged to do good work so that name of God and teaching of Christ might not suffer (1 Tim. 6:1, 2; Titus 2:9, 10; 1 Pet. 2:18)

However, God's Word says that where slaves had legal right to do so, they could seize opportunity to become free (1 Cor. 7:21)

There is no point in Christians' trying to reform social systems, which are part of Satan's world; God is going to annihilate all these bad arrangements, and his kingdom will provide true justice for all

Registrations: Government may require various registrations, such as national service or automobile registrations, for business or social reasons

Caesar Augustus required all to register at their own cities. Although inconvenient to do all that traveling, Joseph and Mary complied (Luke 2:1-5)

If laws require registration of all who are eligible to vote, we register; this is not the same as being required to register in a political party. If they demand we vote, some do, but they vote for Christ as King; however, many prefer to avoid any appearance whatsoever of being part of this world (John 17:16)

Governments usually require that marriages be legalized; we register and get license to marry. In some areas, local authorities request that we notify them when preaching from house to house, so we comply

Most nations require certain documents for leaving or entering country, so, aside from times of grave religious persecution, or fleeing as refugees from war zones, Christians do not try to avoid this legal responsibility by leaving or entering country in any way except that which rulers have authorized, otherwise they would not be "irreprehensible" (2 Cor. 4:2; 1 Tim. 3:2)

PAYING BACK GOD'S THINGS TO GOD

Our subjection to earthly governments is limited by recognition that Jehovah's laws are superior. We cannot give worldly rulers what belongs to God: our lives, our worship, our loyalty to his kingdom

Whenever there is a conflict between man's law and God's law, we must "obey God as ruler rather than men" (Acts 5:29)

This is the only way to continue having Jehovah's spirit (Acts 5:32)

Some governments forbid Jehovah's witnesses to preach. But that is same as telling us to stop worshipping Jehovah, so we cannot obey

When apostles were ordered to stop preaching, they refused (Acts 4:18-20; 5:28-32)

However, if government merely says we cannot go from door to door, we can discreetly alter our methods, calling at only one home in an area at a time; also we can invite people to our studies and meetings

Better to do preaching in another way and keep out of prison, than to persist in one aspect and be confined, severely limiting our entire Christian activity

**BENEFITS FROM OBEYING GOD FIRST
AND THEN CAESAR**

Even in this system, by obeying God's laws first, his people have solved problems nations cannot, showing superiority of God's laws. His servants have solved problem of war, are not divided by nationalism or racism, have no rising crime and venereal disease rates among them, face future with confidence

Obedying Caesar's laws to extent possible provides good training in abiding by laws governing daily living. In new order, all civil matters will come under jurisdiction of Kingdom and its

earthly representatives. So obeying such laws now will make it easier for us to be obedient as regards whatever arrangements are made for governing such matters in new order

MAIN POINT: Jehovah's servants are to make every effort to be peaceful and abide by the laws of the land where they live, even if they do not like some of the laws. But anytime a government asks us to do what God has forbidden, then we refuse, 'obeying God as ruler rather than man'

SOURCES: *ms* 59-62; *li* 280-288; *tr* 157-162; *pm* 350, 351

TEACHING SUGGESTION: Lecture

No. 36 – Second Tuesday, 3:00

The Issue of Sovereignty—How It Affects Us

**BY REASON OF HIS CREATORSHIP
JEHOVAH IS SUPREME SOVEREIGN**

All creation owes its existence to Jehovah (Gen. 1:1, 27, 28; Eph. 3:9)

Upon the operation of his laws we are dependent for the sustaining of our lives (Acts 17:28; Matt. 5:45)

Jehovah's authority as Creator is illustrated by a potter working with clay (Jer. 18:1-6; Rom. 9:19-21)

All creation was brought into existence by God for his purpose; fulfilling that purpose requires recognition of Jehovah's sovereignty, or right to rule (Rev. 4:11)

**GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY CHALLENGED
IN EDEN**

He exercised sovereignty toward Adam and Eve in a loving way

Only few simple, positive commands were issued, permitting them to use their physical and mental powers and personal initiative in wholesome way (Gen. 1:26-30)

God's one prohibitory command was reasonable and showed respect for man's dignity, attributing no bad inclinations to him (Gen. 2:17)

Adam and Eve had no reason to rebel, as they had received only good things from Jehovah

The tree of knowledge of good and bad symbolized the right to set standards of good and bad, which right God reserved for himself

Using the serpent, Satan encouraged Eve to rebel against God's sovereignty by eating of forbidden fruit and thus determining for herself what was good and what was bad (Gen. 3:1-5)

What Satan did in contradicting God's command raised questions about God's sovereignty: Was God truthful so that his word could be depended upon? Did man's life and happiness really depend on obedience to God? Did God

rule in a worthy way, righteously and in best interests of subjects? Did God have the right to rule?

The *fact* of God's sovereignty was never at issue

The point at issue was the rightfulness, righteousness and deservedness of God's sovereignty

Since Satan and first human pair rebelled, another question was raised: Would all other intelligent creatures become disloyal if that seemed advantageous to them?

Satan's claim was that they would do so (Job 2:4, 5)

This being a *moral* issue and not one of sheer might, time was needed for its settlement

Had Jehovah destroyed the rebels immediately, the question would have remained as to whether Satan would have been able to prove his charge

Jehovah did not doubt that the issue would be settled in his favor

He knew himself and knew his rule was good and in best interest of subjects

He had made intelligent creatures in his image, giving them the capacity to develop fine qualities, especially love; he knew that his organization would never withdraw *en masse* (1 Cor. 13:8; Col. 3:14)

**JEHOVAH'S ALLOWING ISSUE TO BE TRIED
BENEFITS HIS CREATURES**

Satan's claim, as voiced in connection with Job, charged God's servants with selfishness; he maintained that Jehovah could not put a man on earth who would prove loyal when his person or his possessions were endangered

By allowing the issue to be tried, Jehovah was giving creatures the opportunity to disprove Satan's slander concerning God's name, also to clear their own name and that of other loyal servants

which we can imitate God and it brings great happiness to those associated with us

Even under great pressure from Satan, love will enable you to maintain integrity
Demonstrate your love for Jehovah by your reliance on Him

MAIN POINT: The way of love is pursued by developing a close relationship with Jehovah and his organization and showing we love our brothers through our following right principles and performing unselfish acts in their behalf

SOURCES: *ad* 1079-1083; *ms* 325-329; *w64* 489-501

No. 44 - Second Thursday, 10:40

Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 1

REASONS WHY THE CONGREGATION MUST BE KEPT CLEAN

Being pure and holy, Jehovah does not tolerate uncleanness among his servants; they must be spiritually and morally clean to represent him properly (1 Pet. 1:14-16)

Requires constantly working against desires of the flesh, influences of the world and temptations of the Devil

Elders have responsibility to safeguard the good spiritual condition of the congregation (1 Cor. 5:3-5)

When cases of serious wrongdoing come to your attention, with concern for the congregation and for the individuals involved, follow through on the matter

Endeavor to restore spiritually the erring ones, if possible

Unrepentant wrongdoers must be removed from the congregation

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

Matters that must come before the judicial committee for handling: (1) Sins that have brought congregation into public disrepute. (2) Loose conduct of gross nature, bordering on fornication; or fornication, adultery or other serious sexual immorality (even if only one offense). (3) *Repeated* acts of lying, stealing, drunkenness or similar sins

In other cases that are not of so grave a nature, if the wrongdoer approaches an elder and openly confesses the wrong and manifests sincere repentance, good counsel from the elder may suffice to "readjust" the individual; the elder should also inform the presiding overseer of the matter and tell him what was done to handle the situation

Where accusation involving something of a nature that would require committee attention is made against another, committee decides if accusation has substance

If so, invites accused to meet with them

Best to send invitation in writing, informing him what his course of action is supposed to have been

Advise that he can bring witnesses

If time set proves inconvenient to the accused one, another time can be selected

If he repeatedly fails to come to hearing, committee will go ahead with meeting, but not judge the person until evidence and testimony are considered; should not take action against him unless evidence proves person's guilt

Avoid demanding attitude; treat kindly

If he has sinned, objective is to help him get restored spiritually, if possible, rather than drive him away

Judging of matters is a heavy responsibility

Direct matters and make investigation so as to get all the facts (Deut. 13:12-15)

Must be two or three eyewitnesses, not just persons repeating what they have heard; no action can be taken if only one witness (Deut. 19:15; 1 Tim. 5:19)

Can accept confession as conclusive witness against self without other corroborating evidence

Before taking any action, be sure that there is sound *Scriptural* reason for doing so, also that the action contemplated is what is actually required

Where one associated is implicated by confession of another, if the one so implicated denies being involved, charge cannot be accepted against him unless there is more than one witness; the one so implicated could be innocent as claimed
Person confessing and making charge would be disciplined as needed for the sin confessed or for lying as to the sin's actually having occurred

More serious action likely would be necessary if found later that he was lying in implicating the other person (Deut. 19:17-21)

If person implicated is guilty, Jehovah knows (Heb. 4:13)

If he is found guilty later, appropriate action can be taken, as he would be guilty not only of the sin charged, but also of lying in denying it at first and letting the other person be viewed as a possible liar

ASCERTAINING THE REAL ATTITUDE OF A WRONGDOER

Since there are degrees of wrongdoing, responsibility rests on elders to determine action needed

Avoid trying to fit case into set of rules; think in terms of principles

What has person done? What does the Bible actually say about such conduct? How has the wrongdoing affected the congregation? Is the wrongdoer genuinely repentant? What judicial action is required?

Reproof can be given "with mildness" (2 Tim. 2:24-26; Gal. 6:1)

Some people need to be reproved "with severity"; (Titus 1:10-13; or 165-168)

In cases where it is established that a serious offense was actually committed, the committee should also consider these factors: (1) What were the circumstances leading up to the wrongdoing? (2) Was there evidence of the person's craving wrongful things or 'courting trouble'? (3) Had he been admonished before that his course was leading toward danger? (4) Was it a single offense or was it committed more than once? (5) Was his confession voluntary or did he have to be accused by others before confessing? (6) And, above all, does he show true repentance and manifest a heartfelt desire to avoid repetition of the wrong?

Neither gravity of wrong nor bad publicity is what finally determines if the person should be disfellowshipped; rather the determining factor is the individual's sincere repentance or lack of it

How can true repentance be identified?

Not all show true feelings by outward emotional manifestations; in contrast, crying does not always indicate godly sorrow

Has individual contritely prayed to Jehovah and sought his forgiveness and mercy? Has he perhaps voluntarily come and confessed to "older men," seeking their help in line with James 5:13-16, 19, 20?

What motivates whatever sadness, remorse and regret he shows? Is it worldly sadness or godly sadness? (2 Cor. 7:8-11)

Should not be just regret over being found out or damage to reputation; naturally one regrets losing privileges

Should be deep regret over damaged relationship with Jehovah, a heartfelt wanting to come back into God's favor, remorse over reproach brought upon His name and people (2 Cor. 7:11, 12)

Repentance also involves a 'change of mind' or 'change of will'

It must include heart-motivated rejection of bad course as repugnant, hated; conversion to right thinking and conduct (Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9)

Love of right and hate of bad create positive force to bring forth "works that befit repentance" (Acts 26:20)

Some manifest repentance right after sin and take steps immediately to confess; others do so later Some even do so at meeting with judicial committee

Is in person's favor when he voluntarily con-

fesses, but still the important factor is, Is he repentant?

HANDLING CASES INVOLVING UNANNOUNCED RESTRICTION OF PRIVILEGES

The committee decides if a case requires public reproof or not

General conditions allowing for handling without public announcement: (1) Single offense; *not a practice* of sin. (2) Had not ignored earlier admonition or reproof; had not 'pursued' wrong, but was overtaken in sin. (3) Must be truly repentant. (4) Wrong course has not brought congregation into public disrepute or is not such as will be readily known by congregation or the public

In seeking to "readjust" such a one, be sure he clearly understands Jehovah's viewpoint of the wrong; also help him to appreciate Jehovah's mercy and how to avail himself of it (Gal. 6:1)

While there may be no public announcement, special privileges are removed

Appointments as elder, ministerial servant or pioneer, or assignments of subordinate nature are canceled

Committee decides if best for him not to comment at meetings or to give student talks for a while; likely will not be called on to offer prayer on behalf of congregation

Presiding overseer notifies others who conduct meetings as to restrictions imposed

Can share in field ministry and freely attend meetings, but no requirements set

Committee may strongly recommend discontinuing certain associations or habits, where these contributed to wrong course; terms of recommendation should be reasonable and Scriptural

No prohibitions on eating and drinking or other things Scriptures allow, but recommendations can be given on moderation as needed

Arrange to visit and otherwise talk with him to build up spiritually

Restoration of privileges is done gradually as committee sees evidence of his regaining spiritual stability and appreciation for Jehovah's righteous ways

Commenting at meetings might be first, then handling student talks; later he might share in a part on the service meeting, assist a ministerial servant, read at meetings and, when well adjusted, offer prayer

When privileges can be fully restored depends upon gravity of wrong and progress individual makes in becoming spiritually strong and in gaining respect of the congregation

May require several months only, or a year or even more; the committee's concern should be: What is best for the erring one and the congregation?

Before recommending him as a ministerial servant, he should be "free from accusation" and "irreprehensible," which may take several years or longer

If one under restriction as to privileges moves to another congregation, the judicial committee *there* follows same procedure in helping erring one get spiritually strong again, and in restoring privileges

The committee of the first congregation can acquaint new committee with the case to extent necessary; but there is no need to contact first committee when full restoration of privileges is made

HANDLING CASES THAT REQUIRE PUBLIC REPROOF

Some serious cases of wrongdoing require public reproof in line with 1 Timothy 5:20 (Read and consider in class)

Conditions either requiring or allowing for public reproof: (1) If serious sin was committed more than once, thus a "practice of sin." (2) Even if single act of serious wrongdoing, person may have failed to heed past admonitions as to consequences of going in the way he was headed, and thus may have been 'courting trouble' by a measure of loose conduct prior to getting into serious trouble. (3) Wrong may have become public knowledge or is of such a nature that it would readily become subject of discussion in the congregation. (4) In all cases, must be sincerely repentant and have turned away from wrong course

Announcement made that person named has engaged in "conduct unbecoming a Christian" (Do not mention specific sin, to avoid possible legal difficulties)

Show what privileges will be restricted for a while

Make no mention of specific time period; this depends upon progress person makes in becoming spiritually restored

Some do not respond as readily to discipline and need more severe reproof to cause seriousness of situation to be deeply impressed on their heart

Public reproof thus has several purposes: Person reproofed with severity that he "may be healthy in the faith" (Titus 1:13); all in the congregation can assist erring one, not putting temptation before him; reduces likelihood of gossip or questions as to whether committee has handled the problem or not; knowledge of the action puts other members in position to defend the congregation before critics as upholding the Bible's standard of conduct; and announced so 'that the rest may have fear,' to make each one stop and think seriously about his own conduct, to see whether he needs to make changes in his own life so as not to lose Jehovah's favor

When person progresses to point where privileges can begin to be restored, no need to announce this; members of the congregation will become aware of it

If person moves to another congregation, the judicial committee *there* supervises further caring for the matter, including gradual return of privileges

Branch office should be notified in every case where wrongdoer is publicly reproofed, if person was appointed as elder, ministerial servant or pioneer; such appointments are canceled

One thus removed as a pioneer should not be recommended again for at least a year and only if he has a good recommendation from the judicial committee

Whether the case is handled with or without public announcement, the individual should understand that a repetition of sin or otherwise getting involved in serious wrongdoing could result in his being disfellowshipped

ADMONISH THOSE

"NOT OBEDIENT TO OUR WORD"

Paul instructed that certain ones should be "marked" for failing significantly in responding to apostolic exhortation and instructions (Read and discuss 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15 in class)

They do not act in an orderly manner, perhaps letting others in the congregation support them when they are able to work to support themselves, or idly meddling in matters not their concern

"Marking" does not indicate any public announcement; but rather that others recognize individual to be poor company and a poor example

Not associating with him intimately should make him ashamed, to motivate a change in heart and conduct

Not viewed as expelled, however, as others, particularly elders, would "continue admonishing him as a brother" (1 Thess. 5:14, 15)

AVOID ASSOCIATION

WITH DISFELLOWSHIPED PERSONS

When a person is disfellowshipped, he is cut off from the congregation; it goes further than 'stopping their association with him' as in 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15

Heed the divine counsel to "remove the wicked man from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:5, 11-13; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20)

The admonition at 2 John 9-11 applies to those who unrepentantly practice immorality or other conduct resulting in disfellowshipping

These people reject the teachings of the Bible just as much as those who reject it doctrinally; hence, none should greet any who have been

disfellowshipped or welcome them into their homes

Blood relatives not living in same home with disfellowshipped relative should avoid contact with this one just as much as possible

If living in same home, such as with a disfellowshipped mate or child, faithful ones should cease spiritual interchange and fellowship

It is hoped that wrongdoer will be impressed with sinfulness of his course and begin to crave spiritual fellowship, inciting him to repentance

At the same time, this action upholds good reputation of the Christian congregation and protects Jehovah's people from the bad influence

Disfellowshipping a child does not prevent parents from counseling or disciplining on basis of God's Word, as necessary

Child could quietly sit in on family studies, not as approved sharer, but as a listener, hoping that this would benefit him in attaining repentance

To participate in family study, child would have to be reinstated on basis of his repentance

Faithful person may encourage his or her disfellowshipped mate to turn around and seek reinstatement

This does not mean sitting down with this mate in Bible study, but rather encouraging repentance

Family members should not listen to disfellowshipped persons if such attempt to justify themselves or influence the faithful ones to their way of thinking or acting

They should refuse to listen to objections to the way their cases were handled; appeals should go to the committee

ELDERS TO SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY

If elders are careful to get all the facts and weigh these as well as the evidence of repentance in the light of Bible principles, it should be evident in most cases what should be done

If additional advice is thought necessary, they can confer with other elders in the area

Do not be quick to write the branch office; the obligation rests upon the local judicial committee, not the branch office, to make the decision

They are on the scene and are able to get the facts, see the manifestations of repentance and otherwise get acquainted with all that is involved

It is difficult to place all vital factors before brothers in the office by correspondence

The office does not have any special instructions you do not have in the Bible and the Society's publications

Always look to Jehovah and follow carefully the instructions in his Word, so as to imitate him and his Son in clearing out what is bad, while showing mercy to the repentant

MAIN POINT: Congregations must be kept clean. Mercy can continue to be shown to wrongdoers who are truly repentant, but unrepentant ones must be put out if the congregation is to represent Jehovah properly

SOURCES: *or* 164-170, 172, 173; *ms* 420-423; *ad* 1385-1389; *w70* 351, 352

No. 45 - Second Thursday, 2:10

Helping Others to Make Advancement

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN ADVANCEMENT

Genuine advancement in the life of a Christian involves drawing closer to Jehovah, deepening our relationship with him

In doing this we more closely imitate Jesus, whose entire purpose in life was the doing of his Father's will (Heb. 10:7; John 5:30)

Such advancement involves growth in knowledge of Jehovah, in appreciation of his ways and in responsiveness to his direction

True Christian advancement will never cease; we will never come to the point where there is no more to learn about Jehovah and his ways (Rom. 11:33, 34)

Christian advancement is manifest basically in two ways: (1) By progress in conforming our conduct, speech and attitude to God's Word. (2) By taking hold of privileges of service that afford opportunities to serve Jehovah in fuller measure

MAKING ADVANCEMENT IS NOT MERELY A MATTER OF ATTAINING TO CERTAIN POSITIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION

The apostle Paul urged Timothy to think in terms of advancement, but in what way? (Discuss 1 Timothy 4:11-16)

Timothy was already an elder; Paul was not writing about getting a new appointment of service or a change of assignment

Even though an elder, Timothy could make progress in more fully conforming his conduct, his speech and his attitude to God's ways (Verse 12)

He could continue to progress in his personal knowledge of God's Word and his ability to use it (Verses 13, 16)

He could also apply himself to improve in his handling of the service assignment entrusted to him by the body of older men (Verse 14)

If "advancement" were limited to attaining cer-

mind when he wrote the words of 1 Corinthians 15:33? (See verses 12, 32 and 34)

At Matthew 5:48, what did Jesus mean when he said, 'You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect'? (See verses 43-47)

In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, who was the "rich man" referred to at Luke 16:19? (See verses 14, 15)

From what are we to 'buy out the opportune time,' as stated at Ephesians 5:16? (See verse 11)

When Paul wrote, at Titus 2:14, that we are to be "zealous for fine works," to what works did he refer? (See Titus 2:1-10; 3:1)

EXPLAIN SCRIPTURES BY USING OTHER BIBLE TEXTS

What is meant by Jesus' words at John 10:30 that 'he and his Father are one'? (John 17:20-23)

What is the "founding of the world" before which Jesus was foreknown, as stated at 1 Peter 1:20? (Luke 11:50, 51)

What did Jesus mean when he said, as recorded at Luke 21:33: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away"? (Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17)

Does 2 Peter 3:7 show that the literal earth is going to be destroyed by fire? (Ps. 104:5; 37:29; Matt. 5:5)

What is the "wild beast" referred to at Revelation 13:1, 2? (Dan. 7:1-7, 17, 23; 8:3-8, 20-22)

EMPHASIZE THE KEY PORTION OF SCRIPTURES TO MAKE CLEAR THEIR APPLICATION TO THE SUBJECT UNDER DISCUSSION

Christ died on a stake, not a cross (Gal. 3:13; Acts 5:30)

It is not necessary to be "born again" in order to have God's spirit (Ex. 35:30, 31; Judg. 6:34)

The soul is the creature himself, and earthly souls are not immortal (Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 18:4)

Christ's one sacrifice was sufficient; it is not repeated in the Mass (Rom. 6:10; Heb. 9:25-28)

Christ's second presence is in spirit (John 14:19; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16)

A Christian must have no part in interfaith movements (2 Cor. 6:14-17)

Taking blood into one's body in any way violates God's laws (Gen. 9:3, 4; Acts 15:28, 29)

Christ's congregation is built upon himself, not upon Peter as the foundation (Eph. 2:20; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42)

Prayers must be directed to Jehovah through Christ, not through "saints" (John 14:6, 13, 14; 1 Tim. 2:5)

Observance of a weekly sabbath day is not required of Christians (Deut. 5:15; Ex. 20:1, 2, 8; Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:9, 10; Col. 2:16, 17)

MAIN POINT: To convey accurate knowledge, be sure that what you say is in full harmony with the Bible, and use appropriate means to make sure that your hearers really grasp what you say

SOURCES: *ad* 1578-1580; *sg* 49-54

TEACHING SUGGESTION: High points of material may be discussed with class for about an hour. Remaining time may be used for a number of three- to five-minute scenes with brother explaining on return visit one of concluding doctrinal points. Select teachings for discussion that particularly apply in your area, assigning material to students in advance. Use scriptures shown. Students should not spend much time on preparation, but consider it like any return visit where one is prepared to talk a few minutes on a subject of interest to householder

No. 48 - Second Friday, 9:10

Safeguarding the Cleanness of the Congregation, Part 2

DISFELLOWSHIPING THOSE WHO ARE UNREPENTANT

Persons who commit serious sins and are unrepentant must be disfellowshipped

Elders must show respect for Jehovah's standards of righteousness and holiness; also protect congregation from willful sinners (1 Cor. 5:9-13)

Care should be exercised by judicial committee in accepting profession of "repentance" where evasive lying, deceit or collusion had been involved

If decision is to disfellowship, judicial committee should draw up announcement for reading to

congregation. To avoid legal difficulties, do not state specifically in the announcement why person was disfellowshipped. Simply state that he or she was disfellowshipped for "conduct unbecoming a Christian." It is a protection to the congregation not to give anything in writing to disfellowshipped person

If baptized person joins a secular organization the entire purpose of which is opposed to the Scriptures, he thereby repudiates the congregation and disassociates himself from it (Matt. 4:8, 9; John 6:15; Isa. 2:2-4)

If investigation of elders proves that he has done this of his own accord, then an announcement

is made to the congregation so that all will know the decision he has made, announcing that the person named, "by his course of conduct, has disassociated himself from the congregation of Jehovah's people"

The judicial committee should notify the branch office in each case, whether the individual was disfellowshipped or disassociated himself

Each member of the judicial committee should sign letter, which should give the date of the action (or date of recognition of disassociation), the ground and a brief review of the evidence for it

Disfellowshipped or disassociated one may attend meetings open to the public if he conducts himself properly; he may not attend meetings held in a private home (2 John 10)

He should not try to speak to others in attendance, just as they will not greet or talk to him

Territory will not be assigned, neither will field reports be accepted from him, as he is not sponsored by the congregation in any preaching he might do. Copies of the Society's publications may be obtained for personal use

If elders learn of recent wrongdoing on part of a baptized one who has not associated for some time, they should do what they can to clear the name of the congregation and to keep it in right standing with God

NONBAPTIZED ASSOCIATES WHO ARE WRONGDOERS

Unbaptized ones who have been regularly associating and who become involved in serious wrongdoing should be dealt with in a way similar to that in the case of those who are baptized

They may not fully understand the Bible's standards, and kind counsel and assistance may help them to adjust their lives

If they are unrepentant, the congregation should be advised that their conduct is "unbecoming a Christian"; but since they are not members of the congregation, they are not formally expelled from it

Nevertheless, elders recommend that none in congregation associate with such a one, in line with 1 Corinthians 15:33. Service reports not accepted; but he can attend meetings if he behaves himself

Association can be accorded him again when he gives up the practice of wrongdoing and shows he wants to live by Bible principles. This may take several months or longer, depending on the circumstances

DEALING WITH MINOR CHILDREN

If a young person gets baptized, thereby becoming a member of the congregation, it shows he wishes to be an obedient disciple of Christ

While a minor, he is still subject to his parents, but now he also comes under the headship of Christ, Head of congregation, and if guilty of

gross disobedience, would have to answer to the elders who have responsibility to deal with such conduct on the part of any members. Being a minor would not shield him from congregational reproof

Parents are responsible to care for minor trespasses on the part of all their children, without trying to shift load upon elders (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:20; Heb. 12:9)

If baptized minor makes a practice of wrongdoing, or does something of a serious nature that might lead to disfellowshipping, or that brings congregation into a bad light, this should be brought to the attention of the elders. Judicial committee will then meet with baptized minor; it is advisable for parents to be present to hear what is said

Primary objective of elders, as with any who commit serious sins, is to "gain" the young brother or sister. In doing so, seek cooperation of parents, in harmonious coordination of authority

As necessary, discipline is administered: May require public reproof, depending upon gravity, extent congregation is affected or sin is known; if, even despite loving but firm help given, unrepentant baptized child persists in wrong course, he should be disfellowshipped

In handling situations involving unbaptized minors who regularly associate with congregation, elders will follow same principles and procedure as with baptized minors

No formal disfellowshipping where unbaptized minor is unrepentant, but congregation should be advised of the situation by announcement, enabling the congregation to safeguard itself against harm

Parents have obligation to cooperate fully with elders in caring for spiritual purity of congregation, placing the spiritual interests and safety of congregation above family relationships, not covering up or excusing flagrant sinning on part of their children

HANDLING CASES INVOLVING MARRIED COUPLES

Unless serious wrongdoing, elders should be careful not to intervene unnecessarily in marital affairs; can help where asked to do so

If serious wrongdoing comes to light, the judicial committee could counsel, reprove or disfellowship either mate as necessary

If wife is wrongdoer, they seek to coordinate their oversight with baptized husband's exercise of headship over wife

If husband is offender, admonition and correction will be given by judicial committee, in view of wife's subordinate position

Restrictions on either mate would be governed by same factors as when any others are counseled or reprovved by committee

REINSTATING REPENTANT DISFELLOWSHIPED PERSONS

If elder is approached by disfellowshipped one, elder may give general comments on what person needs to do to be reinstated

This would not mean a review of his case, as this must be done by the current judicial committee; elder should direct disfellowshipped one to committee for help toward reinstatement

Genuine repentance and turning away from wrong course are the chief determining factors in deciding when a person may be reinstated, not the specific act committed nor merely the time elapsed

It may be several months, a year or even years after disfellowshipping before reinstatement is possible

A precedent is established by Paul's instructions to the congregation in Corinth in handling the case of a serious wrongdoer there. (Discuss 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. Second letter likely written only few months after first one)

Judicial committee should exercise special care to see that one is truly repentant if lying, deceit or conspiracy was previously manifest by individual

If committee decides that person can be reinstated, an announcement is prepared for the congregation; branch office is advised

As in Corinth, all in the congregation should "kindly forgive" and "comfort" repentant one. Since he is not spiritually strong, he will need help as he also applies self to grow spiritually

Privileges will be restored gradually

In time, committee may decide he can comment in meetings and still later do more as he makes spiritual progress. A year or even more may pass before he is called on to share in parts on the meetings or otherwise serve in representative capacity, possibly even offering prayer

Must be "free from accusation" and "irreprehensible" before recommended for appointment as ministerial servant or elder. (1 Tim. 3:2, 7, 10; Titus 1:6, 7) Must 'live down' reproach and build up convincing record of righteousness. May take five, ten or fifteen years, depending upon gravity of wrongdoing. Some may never do so sufficiently in their lifetimes

If disfellowshipped person moves, announcement should be made of his disfellowshipped status at new congregation where he attends

Any plea for reinstatement could be made to judicial committee of congregation where he now attends meetings; they consider evidence of repentance and right conduct and write recommendation to the judicial committee that first took the action

The decision as to reinstatement would be made by the now-existing committee of the congregation where the disfellowshipping took place

APPEALING DECISIONS OF A JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

An appeal can be made to local body of elders for a rehearing of one's case, if one believes an error in judgment was made

A new judicial committee can be made up of different elders from same congregation or from neighboring congregations, if necessary

It is recommended that the presiding overseer write the branch office and have the office recommend elders who can help in hearing the appeal

All previous evidence should be reheard, along with any new evidence

Wherever possible, members of the judicial committee who previously heard the case should be present. They can point out any discrepancies they observe and testify as necessary

Appeal committee may wish to question the first committee on reasons for reaching conclusion they did

The testimony of all witnesses who have pertinent testimony and any written records should be considered

Decision of appeal committee is final, whether they affirm or reverse the former decision

If disfellowshipping is upheld, appeal committee does not determine when offender is reinstated but that responsibility belongs with committee of congregation where offender was a member

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL ELDERS A WEIGHTY ONE

Not just elders on judicial committee but all elders are responsible to shepherd flock, teaching, reproving, reprimanding and exhorting as necessary (Titus 1:9-14; 2 Tim. 1:7; 4:1-5)

Great care should be exercised in order to avoid partiality, never letting fleshly relationships or personal friendships cause favoritism or bias in judgment (Deut. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1:17)

If an elder is personally involved in a case, perhaps needed to serve as a witness or related to a wrongdoer, it may be advisable for him to step down from judicial committee and let another elder take his place to avoid any appearance of partiality

Seek to imitate Jehovah and his Son in showing mercy, dealing "moderately with the ignorant and erring ones," as the high priest of Israel was instructed to do (Heb. 5:2; Matt. 5:7)

Seek to "gain" erring ones, "instructing with mildness those not favorably disposed," or who show wrong thinking or understanding for a time (2 Tim. 2:23-26)

Paul did not prefer to act with severity (2 Cor. 13:10)

Elders must never be disloyal to God or show disrespect for his holiness, nor manifest lack of love for brothers they serve by allowing wrongdoers to go uncorrected or unreprieved; cannot tolerate corrupting influences (Compare 1 Samuel 2:12-17, 27-30; Malachi 2:8, 9; Jude 3, 4)

Elders can request assistance and counsel from fellow elders in a neighboring congregation. This can be done without first corresponding with the branch office

Ministerial servants do not handle judicial matters

EACH ONE'S PART IN SAFEGUARDING THE CLEANNESS OF THE CONGREGATION

All in congregation have responsibility to help keep congregation clean. (2 Cor. 7:1) This is done by: One's own personal conduct; resisting temptation; refusing to feed mind on wrong ideas; by parents' properly training and disciplining their children; younger persons' being

obedient to parents and refusing to imitate world and its ways; and by properly teaching interested ones Bible's high moral standards

If one witnesses serious wrongdoing, or comes to know of it, loyalty to God and his Son will motivate him to bring it to attention of judicial committee. (Discuss Deuteronomy 13:6-8; Leviticus 5:1; Proverbs 29:24) We do not help wrongdoer by concealing his wrongdoing

Decisions of judicial committee should be respected and upheld by all in congregation. Living by Jehovah's requirements now is preparation for life in God's new system. Learning and impressing God's righteous precepts on mind and heart will help us go the right way and avoid great sorrow, leading to God's blessing and everlasting life

MAIN POINT: All have a responsibility to keep the congregation clean, in order to have Jehovah's continued favor and blessing

SOURCE: *or* 170-182

No. 49 - Second Friday, 10:40

How to Aid Those with Marital Problems

RESPONSIBILITY OF ELDERS TO HELP THOSE WITH MARITAL PROBLEMS

First-century elders helped persons with marital problems; under inspiration they provided counsel that elders today can use to help Christian couples (Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)

The goal of elders is to help couples apply God's counsel so that they 'stick together,' and enjoy the happiness God purposed for marriage to bring (Matt. 19:4-6)

It is not the business of elders to butt into others' private marital affairs. However, when couples desire help, elders should be willing to provide it

WHAT ELDERS CAN DO TO HELP COUPLES RESOLVE MARITAL PROBLEMS

Whenever possible, talk with couple together about their problems, rather than listening to only one side

It is not your place to set rules, but simply show the Scriptural principles involved and how these can be applied

Be patient; remember that problems often are old and wounds deep, so the healing process may be slow

Try to help couple to look above their problems to see that marriage is Jehovah's provision, and that his name and reputation are connected with it (Gen. 2:18-24)

Marriage is an arrangement instituted by God; he blessed the union of the first human pair, and assigned them activities that would bring

them happiness if they faithfully carried them out (Gen. 1:28)

Satan and his wicked system try to downgrade marriage; Christian husbands and wives can bring honor to Jehovah's name by handling matters in His way, on the basis of love

Help them to realize that marital problems are due to failure to apply the counsel of God's Word; this may reflect failure to have regular Scriptural discussion or family study (Prov. 3:1-6)

Help them to appreciate value of such regular discussion or family study; perhaps you can invite them to join your family study a time or two to build appreciation for the arrangement

If there is screaming, lack of forgiveness, repaying of evil for evil, this is all due to failure to put on the new personality, which results from accurate knowledge of God's Word (Col. 3:7-10)

If they start to make strong accusations and counteraccusations and to raise their voices, ask that they direct their comments to you

Point out that one of their basic problems evidently is inability to communicate. What is the reason?

One problem is that they need to learn to cultivate the fruits of God's spirit, including kindness, mildness and self-control. God gladly gives his spirit to those who ask for it (Luke 11:9, 10, 13); so they need to learn to pray for Jehovah's help before they speak (Jas. 1:5)